

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-03 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0740
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 01044

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PBOR, IS, JO, SHUM
SUBJECT: HEBRON'S MAYOR FEARS IMPOSITION OF SELF GOVERNMENT

REF: JERUSALEM 1043

SUMMARY: HEBRON'S MAYOR FEELS THAT THE MILGOV'S CURRENT HEAVY
HAND IN DEALING WITH WEST BANK IS PRELUDE TO IMPOSITION OF BEGIN'S
SELF RULE SCHEME. ONLY A FEW SCORE OF LOCAL PALESTINIANS
WOULD COOPERATE IN SUCH A PROJECT, THE MAYOR BELIEVES. END
SUMMARY.

1. CONGEN AND POLOFF MET WITH HBRON'S MAYOR QAWASIMA FOR AN
HOUR APRIL 11 IN HEBRON AT THE MAYOR'S REQUEST AND HEARD SHARP
CRITIQUE OF "MILGOV'S UNPRECEDENTED CAMPAIGN OF INTIMIDATION
AND PROVOCATION."

2. THE MAYOR SAID ISRAELI PRESSURE WAS BEING APPLIED AT ALL
LEVELS IN HEBRON:

--IN ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOLS WHERE THE
IDF WAS USING TEAR GAS IN CLASSROOMS, ENTERING
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CLASSROOMS, ARRESTING STUDENTS ARBITRARILY AND IMPOSING
FINES IN EXCESS OF IL 10,000.
--WITH LAWYERS, PHARMACISTS AND DOCTORS WHO ARE BEING
SUMMONED TO MILGOV HDQ AND DETAINED FOR NO REASON FOR
SEVERAL HOURS OR DAYS,
--WITH THE MUNICIPALITY WHERE EMPLOYEES ARE BEING HAR-
ASSED AND WATER, SCHOOL AND ELECTRICAL PROJECTS ARE

BLOCKED.

3. THE MAYOR SAID HE HIMSELF HAD BEEN THREATENED BY THE MILGOV AND INSULTED BY IDF OFFICERS IN THE COURSE OF HIS DUTIES. HE OBJECTED PARTICULARLY TO IDF'S ARBITRARY DETENTION OF RELATIVES OF CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS WHO WERE HELD AS VIRTUAL HOSTAGES TO INDUCE COLLABORATION.

4. THIS CAMPAIGN OF INTIMIDATION PRE-DATES ISRAELI ATTACK ON SOUTH LEBANON AND HAS CONTINUED THEREAFTER, THE MAYOR SAID. IT WAS A PRELUDE TO IMPOSITION OF BEGIN'S SELF RULE PLAN, THE MAYOR BELIEVES. ASKED IF THERE WERE SUFFICIENT NUMBERS OF LOCAL PALESTINIANS WHO WOULD COOPERATE IN SUCH A PROJECT, QAWASIMA SAID HE THOUGHT NOT. HOWEVER, HE ANTICIPATED GRADUAL IMPLEMENTATION AND SAID THERE WERE A FEW SCORE OF PEOPLE IN HEBRON WHO MIGHT PUT PERSONAL GAIN ABOVE NATIONAL INTEREST. IN THIS REGARD, HE MENTIONED MUSTAFA DOUDIN AND HIS PROJECT TO SET UP AN ASSOCIATION FOR ARAB VILLAGES.

5. QAWASIMA SAID AMERICA HAD A SPECIAL POSITION IN THE AREA AND HE FELT OBLIGED TO DRAW ITS ATTENTION THROUGH THE CONGEN TO THESE DEVELOPMENTS.

6. COMMENT: WE DISCOUNT THE MAYOR'S FEARS THAT THE
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GOI WILL UNILATERALLY IMPOSE SELF RULE, ALTHOUGH THAT POSSIBILITY HAS BEEN MOOTED BY DAYAN, BECAUSE THAT WOULD LEAVE BEGIN EMPTY HANDED AT THE CONFERENCE TABLE AND GUARANTEE ITS REJECTION BY LOCAL PALESTINIANS. USE OF TEAR GAS INSIDE SCHOOLS, ARBITRARY ARRESTS, DETENTIONS AND HEAVY FINES HAVE BEEN CONSISTENTLY AND RELIABLY REPORTED FROM MANY REGIONS OF THE WEST BANK SINCE ISRAEL'S ATTACK ON SOUTH LEBANON. DISAGREEMENTS ON MUNICIPAL PROJECTS ARE CHRONIC. "HOSTAGES" TO INDUCE COLLABORATION WOULD BE AN ORIGINAL IDEA OF HEBRON'S MILGOV, HOWEVER. RATHER THAN A PRELUDE TO SELF RULE, WE SUSPECT THE IDF HAS BATTENED DOWN WEST BANK HATCHES TO RIDE OUT THE SOUTH LEBANON STORM. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS INSTRUCTIVE THAT HEBRON'S MAYOR LIKE MAYOR FREIJ (REFTL) SEES SELF RULE AS LESS NOT MORE DESIRABLE THAN OCCUPATION. ISRAELI USE OF MADE-IN-U.S.A. CS GAS IN CLOSED CLASSROOMS IS NOT WINNING US ANY FRIENDS HERE.
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